

THE

SANDMAN ♦ UNIVERSE

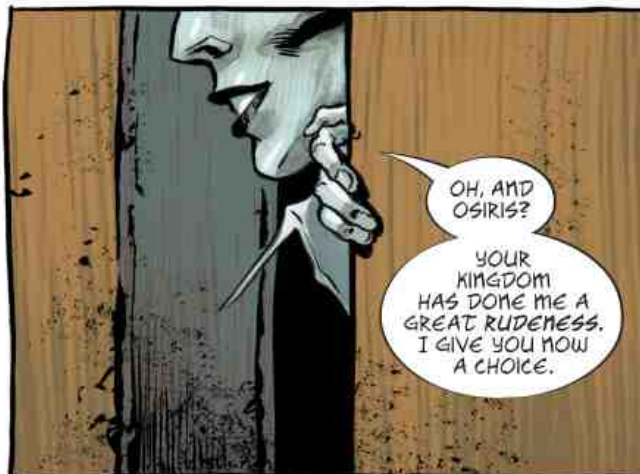
Lucifer

10

DC
VERTIGO
MATURE
READERS
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Dan Watters
Max Fiumara
Massimiliano Leomacs
Dave McCaig









WE NEED
SOMEWHERE
WHERE THE
PRAYERS FLOW
LIKE WINE.



WELCOME
TO PATALA.
RATHER MORE
LIKE IT, YOU'LL
AGREE.



HULLO.
WE'RE SEEKING
COUNSEL AND
HOSPITALITY.



HELLO,
VISHNU.

LUCIFER.
I HAVE NOT
MET YOU AS
THIS AVATAR
BEFORE.

YOU HAD
WINGS, DID
YOU NOT?

I DID,
LORD VISHNU.
IT'S BEEN A
FUNNY FEW
DECADES.

YOU WISH
TO SEEK
ASYLUM FOR
SYCORAX.

How
do you
know?

I KNOW ALL
THINGS IN THIS
PLACE. I AM ALL
THINGS IN THIS
PLACE.

I WILL TAKE YOU TO
YAMA. IT IS HE WHO
DECIDES WHERE THE
DEAD MUST GO. YOU
WILL FIND HIM IN
NARAKA.

You are
the same
man.

I AM RAMA.
AN AVATAR OF
VISHNU, IT IS TRUE.
BUT MY OWN MAN,
NONETHELESS, I
LIVED AND DIED
A KING.

FOLLOW ME,
PLEASE. WE ARE
GOING DOWN
INTO THE DEPTHS.
PERHAPS YOU
WILL FEEL AT
HOME.

WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING,
DAYAANI?

DOES
KALI KNOW
THAT YOU ARE
SNEAKING UP
TO THE LIVING
WORLD?

SHE DOES,
LORD RAMA.
MY LADY HAS
GIVEN ME
LEAVE FOR
THE NIGHT. ALL
OF MY KIND
ARE MEETING
TOGETHER...

"WE'RE GOING TO THE
WITCHES' SABBATH."

COME TO THE
SABBATH.

IT IS BEING HELD ON AN
ISLAND OUT BEYOND
THE WORLD'S END.

IN A PLACE
HIDDEN FROM
THE EYES OF
GOD AND HIS
SERVANTS.

IT WILL
BE A LOT
OF FUN.

THERE WILL
BE DANCING
AND DRINKING
AND FEASTING.

THERE WILL BE
SACRIFICE AND
BLOODLETING.
FIRE AND SMOKE.

ALL OF THE
WITCHES OF THE
WORLD WILL BE
THERE.

ALL OF THOSE OUTCAST
WOMEN. THE WILD, THE
FREE. THE DOWNTRODDEN
WHO SOUGHT THEIR
POWER ELSEWHERE.

AND
TONIGHT...



THEY HAVE A
SPECIAL GUEST.



SOMETIMES THE MOON IS
FEMALE AND JOINS IN OUR
CELEBRATIONS.



BUT
TONIGHT HE'S
YOUR MOON, ISN'T
HE? SO HE HIDES
BEHIND A BLOOD
RED VEIL.

MY MOON HE IS NOT. BUT
YOU'RE RIGHT, THESSALY,
THAT HE *HIDES* FOR
SHAME, SINCE I
SPURNED HIM.



YOU
SPURNED
HIM FOR
LUCIFER.

ONCE.

SOME OF
THE WOMEN
HERE ARE UNDER
THE DEVIL'S
PATRONAGE,
YOU KNOW.

HE
OFFERED
THEM *POWER*--
WHEN IT SUITED
HIM. THESE
SABBATHS ARE
SOMETIMES
HELD IN HIS
HONOR.



BUT NOT
TONIGHT.

NO.

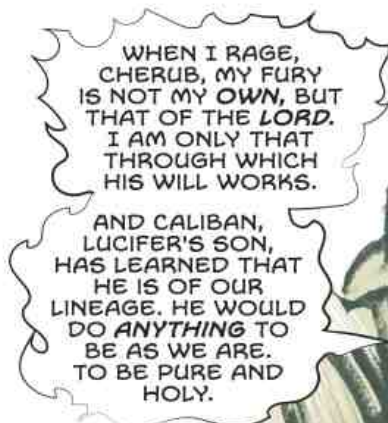


NOT
TONIGHT.



AND THEY DANCE, AND
BASK IN THE PRESENCE
OF SYCORAX, THE
WITCH QUEEN...





ON A HIDDEN ISLAND BEYOND
THE END OF THE WORLD,
THEY WAIL AND CRY FOR ALL
THOSE RAPED AND
TORTURED SINCE LAST THEY
WAILED AND CRIED--

--AND ALL THOSE
DEAD BY THE
HANDS THAT WERE
MEANT TO HOLD
THEM SAFE.



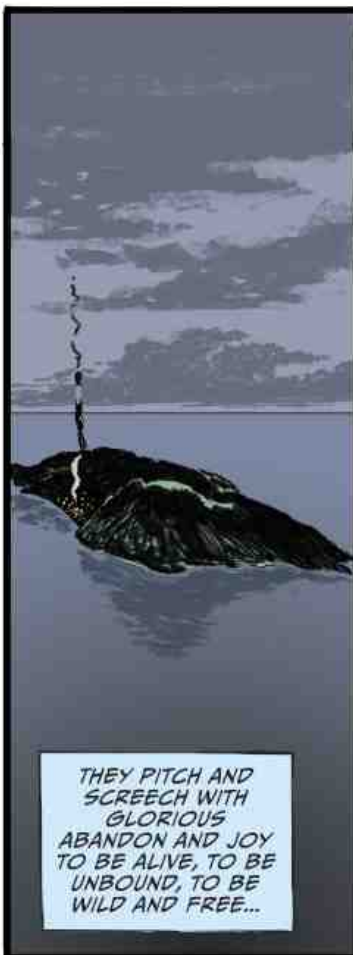
RAGUEL IN
HEAVEN, WRATH
OF GOD,
CANNOT HEAR
THEM.



THEY CELEBRATE THEIR
UNCONDITIONAL RAGE, AND
THEIR RIGHT TO TAKE
VENGEANCE IN THIS WORLD
AND THE NEXT.



THE ARCHANGEL
IN THE SILVER
CITY, JUSTICE
OF THE LORD,
CANNOT SEE
THEM.



THEY PITCH AND
SCREECH WITH
GLORIOUS
ABANDON AND JOY
TO BE ALIVE, TO BE
UNBOUND, TO BE
WILD AND FREE...



PERHAPS
THERE. WHERE
IT IS QUIETEST.
PERHAPS THAT IS
THE EYE OF THE
STORM.

RAGUEL CASTS HIS
EYE, FOLLOWING
THE CHERUB'S
FINGER TO WHERE
HE CANNOT SEE...

...HE BELLOWS AS HE STRAINS TO COMPREHEND AND REACH THIS PLACE THAT GOD HAS NEVER TOUCHED.

SHOULD WE FLEE?

NO.

THIS IS OUR NIGHT.



IF HE WOULD COME TO THE SABBATH, LET HIM TRY!

ALTHOUGH LUCIFER PUT PROTECTIONS ON THIS PLACE, RAGUEL COMES WITH ALL THE FORCE OF THE LORD.

HE COMES WITH THE QUAKING FURY THAT TURNED SODOM AND GOMORRAH TO ASH.

ON ANY OTHER NIGHT...THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.

...HE BELLOWS AS HE STRAINS TO COMPREHEND AND REACH THIS PLACE THAT GOD HAS NEVER TOUCHED.

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ON ANY OTHER NIGHT...THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.

BUT TONIGHT IS THE SABBATH, AND
THE AIR IS THICK WITH WITCHES.

THE SKY TREMORS WITH
THE RAGE OF ZHU, OF
CUNNING WOMEN, OF
THAKATHI.

AND THEY DO NOT
WANT GOD HERE.

EVEN SO.

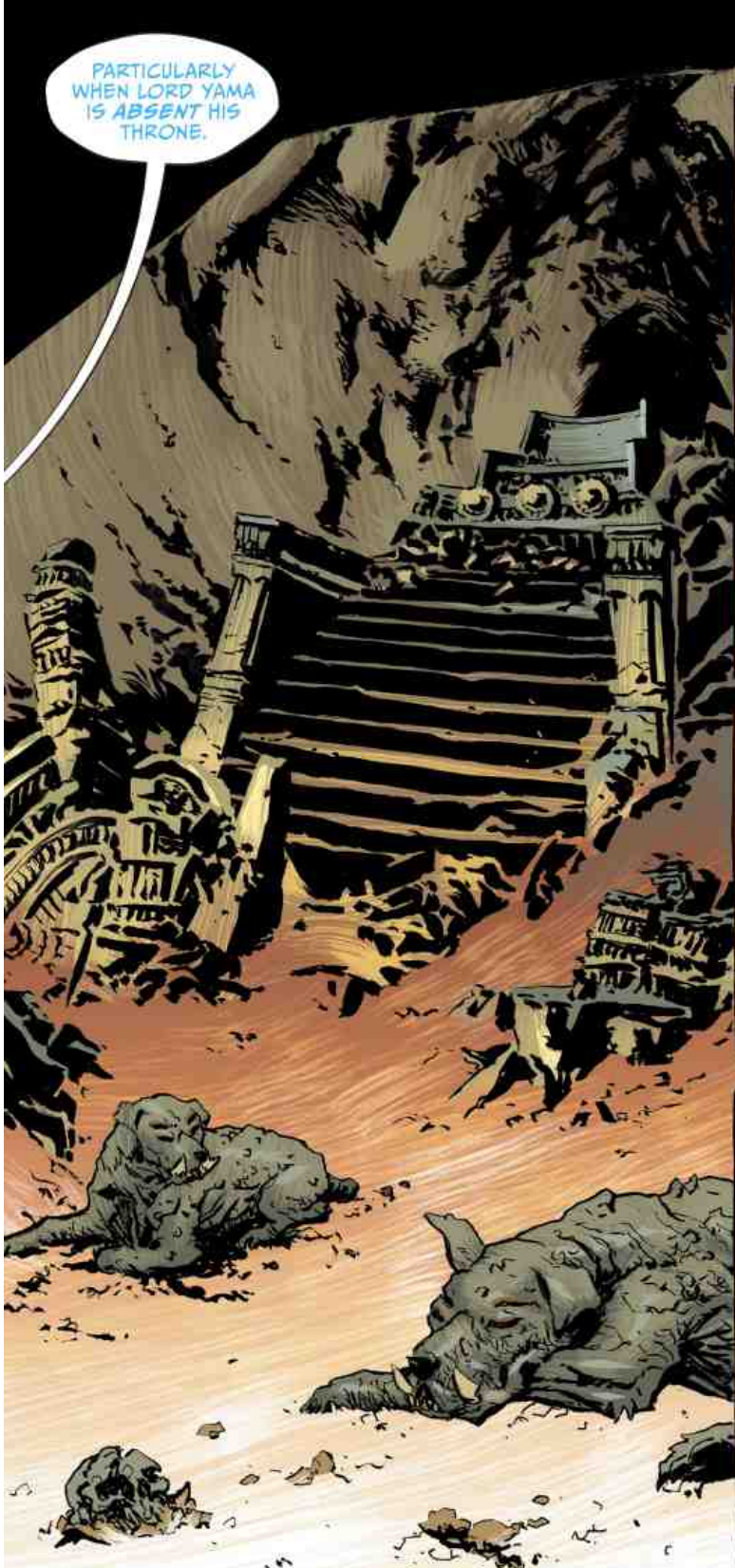
WOULD
IT BE
ENOUGH
TO STOP
HIM?

IF OLD BLOOD
MAGIC HAD NOT
BEEN SET HERE,
TOO?

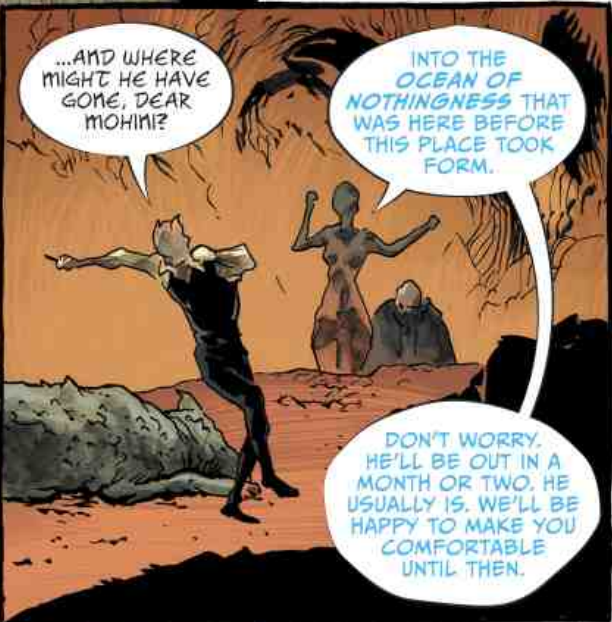
CRUDE, POWERFUL
DEMON MAGIC--
THAT HAD BEEN
DESIGNED FOR USE
AGAINST ANGELS IN
THE WAR THAT WAS
THE FIRST WAR?

IT IS HARD
TO KNOW.





PARTICULARLY
WHEN LORD YAMA
IS ABSENT HIS
THRONE.



...AND WHERE
MIGHT HE HAVE
GONE, DEAR
MOHINI?

INTO THE
OCEAN OF
NOTHINGNESS THAT
WAS HERE BEFORE
THIS PLACE TOOK
FORM.

DON'T WORRY.
HE'LL BE OUT IN A
MONTH OR TWO. HE
USUALLY IS. WE'LL BE
HAPPY TO MAKE YOU
COMFORTABLE
UNTIL THEN.



MONTHS...

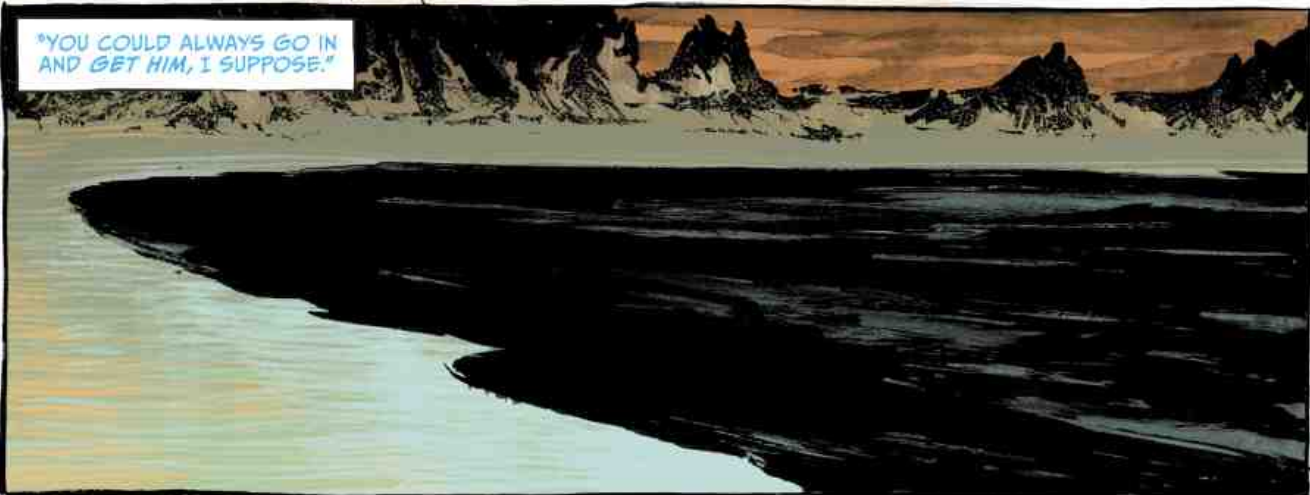
LORD
VISHNU--

MOHINI.

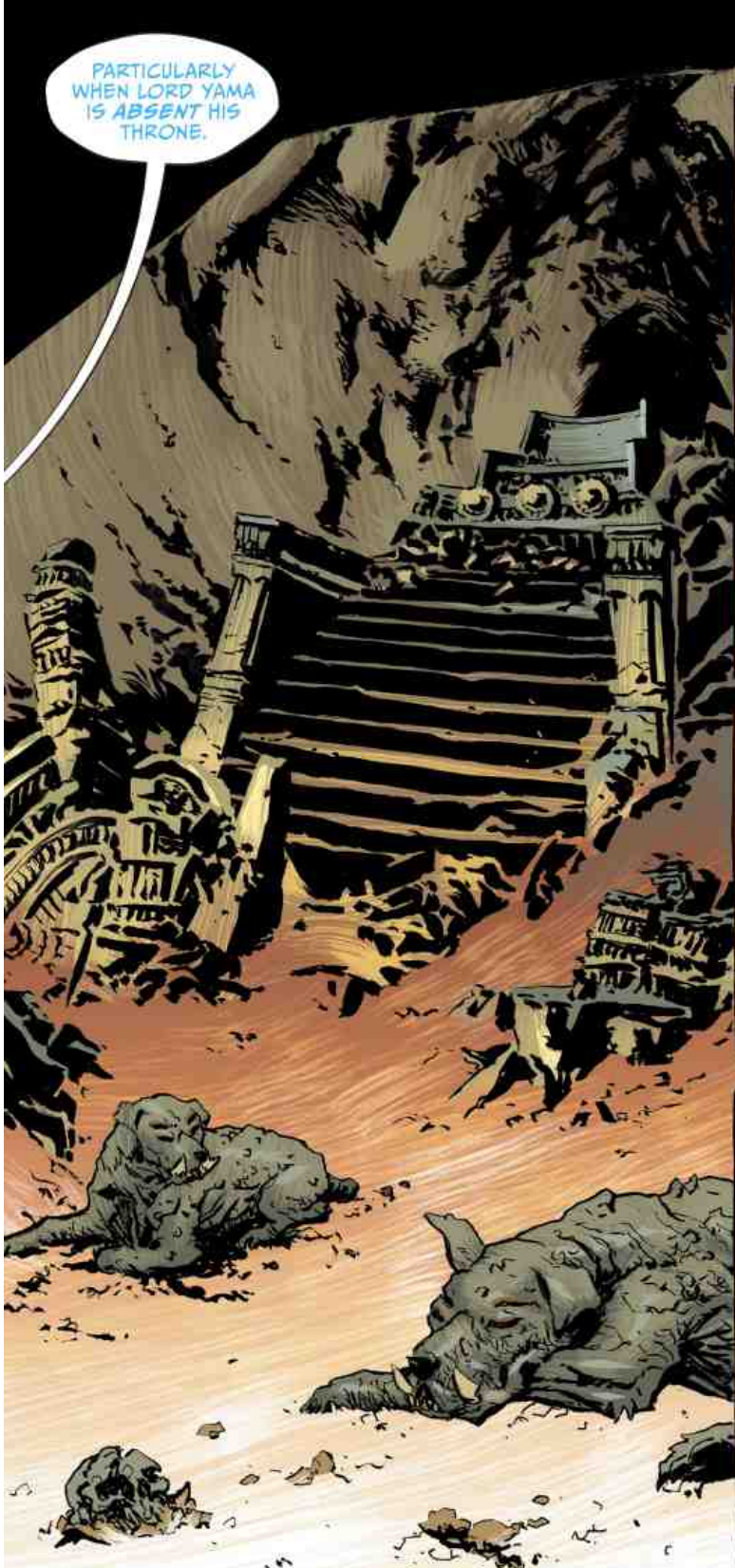


MY APOLOGIES. BUT
IF VISHNU KNEW OF MY
INTENT, THEN YOU DO,
TOO. AND IF HE KNEW OF
IT, HE KNEW I HAD ONLY
TWO MORE DAYS TO
COMPLETE IT.

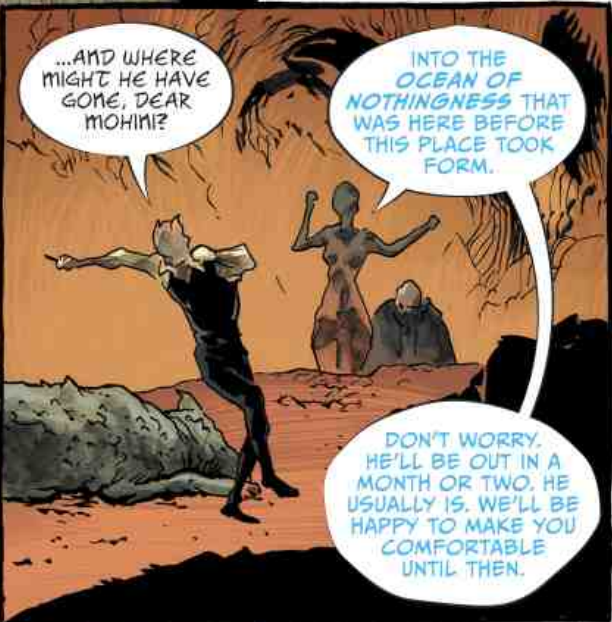
WELL.



"YOU COULD ALWAYS GO IN
AND GET HIM, I SUPPOSE."



PARTICULARLY
WHEN LORD YAMA
IS ABSENT HIS
THRONE.



...AND WHERE
MIGHT HE HAVE
GONE, DEAR
MOHINI?

INTO THE
OCEAN OF
NOTHINGNESS THAT
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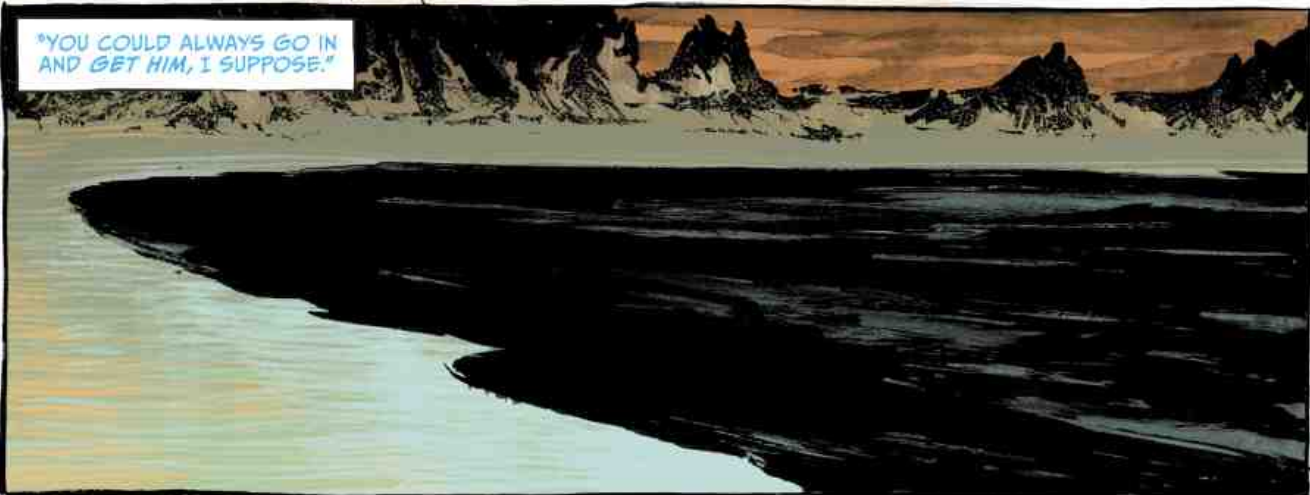
LORD
VISHNU--

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IF VISHNU KNEW OF MY
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TOO. AND IF HE KNEW OF
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TWO MORE DAYS TO
COMPLETE IT.

WELL.



"YOU COULD ALWAYS GO IN
AND GET HIM, I SUPPOSE."



HE'S
SOMEWHERE
WITHIN THERE. DEEP
DOWN. QUITE A FALL.
YOU'VE LEARNED TO
FALL WITH GRACE,
HAVEN'T YOU,
LUCIFER?

FALLING'S
EASY
ENOUGH.



BUT
THIS ISN'T
WATER...MERELY
VOID. AND I NO
LONGER HAVE
WINGS. RETURNING
WOULD BE THE
ISSUE.



LUCIFER. YOU
HAVE MET THREE
OF MY AVATARS
SINCE YOU FOUND
YOUR WAY TO
PATALA.

AS I TOLD
YOU, THINGS
ARE FAR
MORE FLUID
HERE.



CAN YOU
NOT FEEL YOUR
OWN AVATARS
AT YOUR
SHOULDER?

ALL THOSE
LUCIFERS YOU
HAVE BEEN AND
COULD
BE?

THEY DANCED WITH JOY
AND DELIRIUM AT HAVING
SENT AWAY YAHWEH'S
RIGHT HAND.

BUT AS THE SUN ROSE OVER
THE ISLAND AND THE BLOOD
RED MOON WAS BANISHED,
THEY BEGAN TO REMEMBER
HIS RAGE AND HIS POWER.

THEY REMEMBERED
TO FEAR IT.

AND WITH THE
SABBATH OVER
THEY RETURNED
TO HOUSES AND
COTTAGES.

TO CAVES AND
GROTTOES, TO
FORESTS,
UNDERWORLDS,
AND DEEP
GREEN
MEADOWS.

ALL BUT
A FEW.

ABANDONED.
AGAIN.

I'M STILL
HERE. HEAVEN
CAN'T SEE THIS
PLACE, RIGHT?
AND I'M
CURIOUS.

AS
AM I.

THE MAGICKS
LUCIFER CAST
AROUND THIS PLACE
MEANT THAT YAHWEH
COULD NOT FIND IT
FOR THOUSANDS
OF YEARS.

LAST NIGHT
SOMETHING
DREW HIS
SERVANT
HERE.

AND
WHERE IS
THE MAZIKEEN?
SOMETHING IS
WRONG HERE.

A DAY AND A HALF I HAVE
LEFT, TO SPEND ON THIS
WRETCHED ROCK
CALLED EARTH.

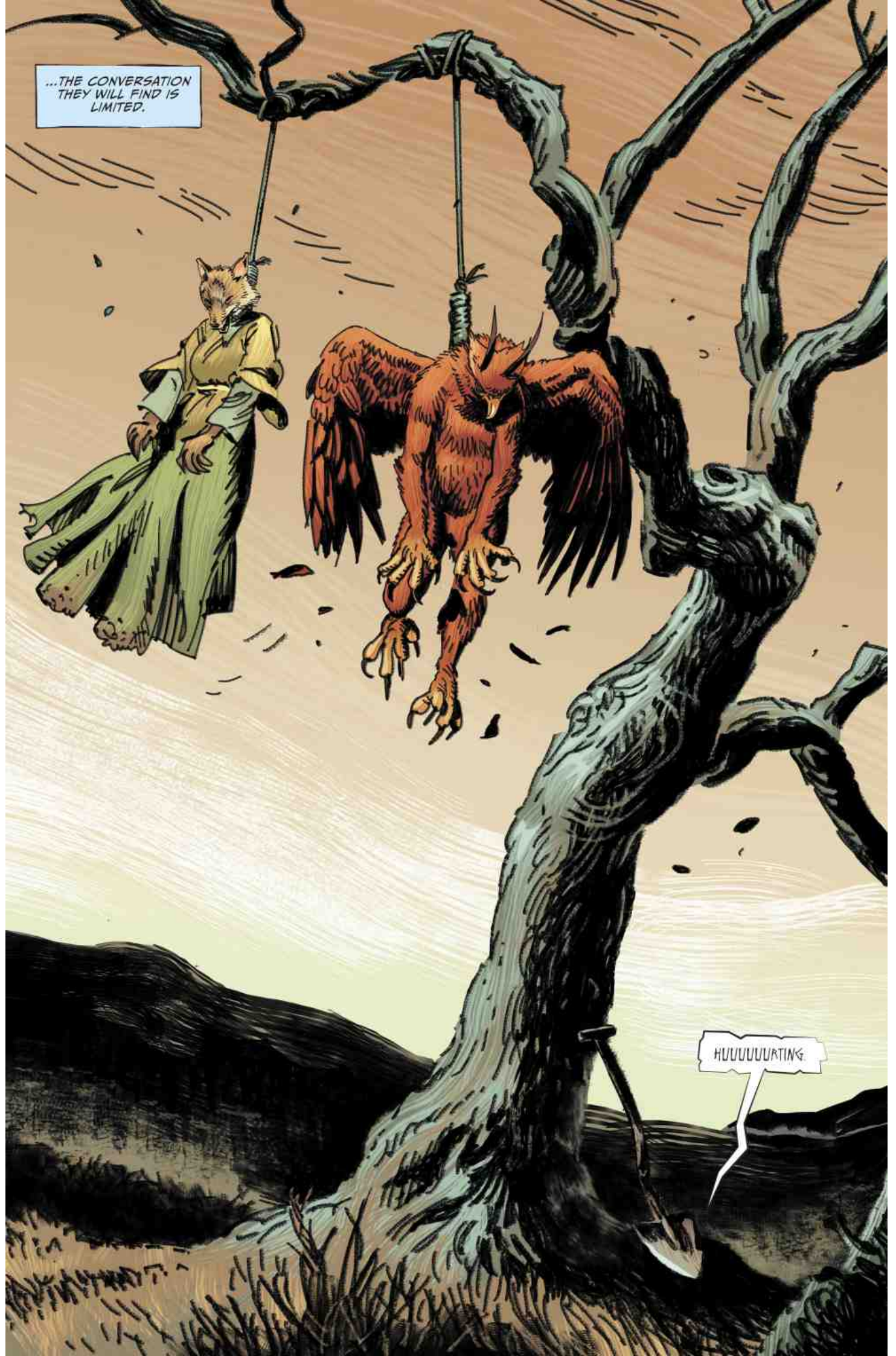
LUCIFER HAS
ABANDONED
ME. MY SON HAS
ABANDONED ME.
AND *SOMEONE*
HERE FURTHER
PLOTS AGAINST
ME.

WE MUST
SEARCH THIS
ISLAND FOR
ANYONE WHO
SHOULD NOT
BE HERE...

AND WE MUST
REMEMBER TO
MAKE THEM TALK
BEFORE WE TEAR
OUT THEIR
TONGUES.

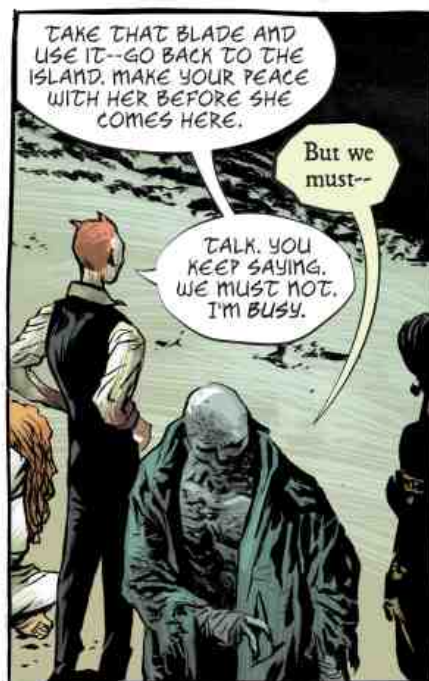
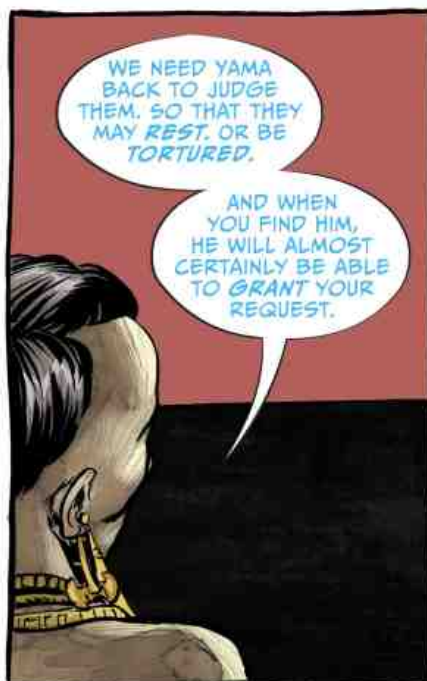
AND SEARCH THEY
WILL. BUT ALAS...

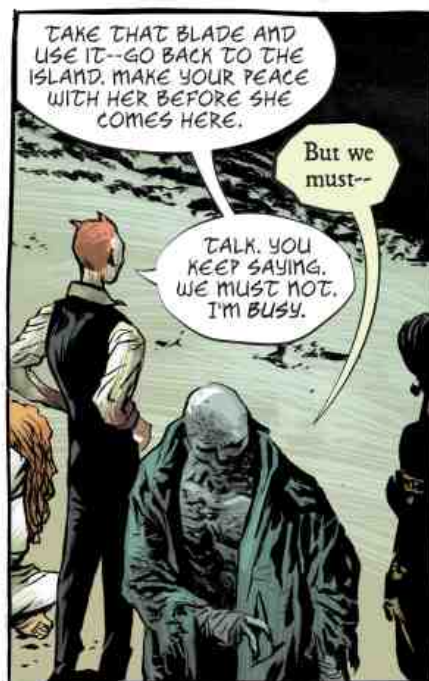
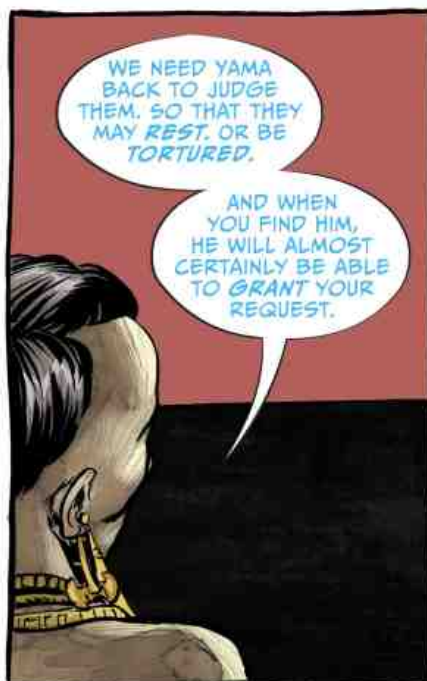
...THE CONVERSATION
THEY WILL FIND IS
LIMITED.



HUUUUURTING.









THE VOID IS, BY ITS
NATURE, A NOTHING
PLACE. IT IS NOT COLD
OR WARM. THERE IS NO
SENSATION OF SINKING.
THERE IS NO
SENSATION AT ALL.

IT IS INFINITELY
FAMILIAR TO
LUCIFER. HE CAME
INTO BEING
SOMEWHERE JUST
LIKE THIS.



HE CLOSES HIS
EYES. HE WOULD
NEVER ADMIT THAT
HE IS TEMPTED TO
BE EMBRACED
BY IT.

THE MAZIKEEN
WAS BORN IN
DARKNESS
AS WELL.



A DARKNESS NOT
OF VOID, BUT OF
ROT AND WARMTH.



OF STINK
AND FLESH.



THAT IS WHERE
DEMON THINGS
GROW AND
SPROUT.



AND
FLOURISH.



BUT THIS IS A
DARK IN WHICH
OTHER THINGS
FLOURISH, TOO.

HUNGRY THINGS.

To Be Continued

Lucifer

"THE PROBLEM WITH OLD BLOOD MAGIC"

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*LUCIFER based on characters created by Neil Gaiman, Sam Kieth, and Mike Dringenberg
Curated for THE SANDMAN UNIVERSE by Neil Gaiman*



NEXT ISSUE: MEDITATIONS ON NOTHING AT ALL

Time is running out for
Sycorax, and Caliban
succumbs to desperate
measures as both Raguel and
the end draw near.

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SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

